

much, but ride with ease, passing two or three hours a day on horseback, and every three or four months taking in a carriage a journey of ninety miles to a distant possession, where I pass a good deal of my time. My eyes need the aid of glasses by night, and with small print in the day also. My hearing is not quite so sensitive as it used to be, no tooth shaking yet, but shivering and shrinking in body from the cold we now experience, my thermometer having been as low as twelve degrees this morning. My greatest oppression is a correspondence afflictingly laborious. \* \* \* Could I reduce this epistolary *corvee* within the limits of my friends and affairs, and give the time redeemed from it to reading and reflection, to history, ethics, mathematics, my life would be as happy as the infirmities of age would admit, and I could look on its consummation with the composure of one *qui summum metuit diem nee optat*"

This self-imposed task- o-f writing an appropriate answer to each letter that reached him became more and more intolerable. He found scant time for the few correspondents for whom he really cared. Even Adams' letters went for months unanswered. Finally at the end of 1816 a heart-felt cry for relief was wrung from him. He wrote to Adams: "Delaplaine lately requested me to give him a line on the subject of his book; meaning, as I well knew, to publish it. This I constantly refuse; but in this instance yielded that, in saying a word for him I might say two for myself. I expressed in it freely my sufferings from this source, hoping it would have the effect of an indirect appeal to the indiscretion of those, strangers and others, who', in the most friendly disposition, oppress me with their concerns, their pursuits, their projects, inventions and speculations, political, moral, religious, mechanical, mathematical, historical, etc., etc., etc. I hope this appeal will bring me relief." His friends seem to have taken the hint, for his correspondence from this date shows a decided falling off, though, indeed, implicit reliance is not to be placed in the proportion of the published letters.

It was in 1817 that the goal toward which Jefferson had been striving so long came in view. At the preceding session of the legislature, his ideas on higher education had been embodied